

**KING COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT NO. 27**  
**King County, Washington**  
**January 1, 1991 Through December 31, 1993**

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**Schedule Of Findings**

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1. King County Fire Protection District No. 27 Officials Should Not Increase Compensation After Services Are Performed

On January 24, 1991, the board of fire commissioners awarded a \$4,000 "Job Performance Bonus" to the retiring fire chief to "express their thanks to Malcolm Pearson on behalf of the community for the contributions he has made towards the development and maintenance of Fire District No. 27's Fire/Emergency Aid Department" after the services were performed.

The awarding of a bonus, which was not mentioned and/or part of any of the employment contracts the chief signed while employed by the district, violates the Washington State Constitution, Article II, Section 25, which states in part:

The legislature shall never grant any extra compensation to any public officer, agent, employee, servant, or contractor, after their services shall have been rendered . . . .

Additionally, such a payment may be characterized as a gift of public funds which is precluded by Article VIII, Section 7 of the Washington State Constitution which states in part:

No county, city, town or other municipal corporation shall hereafter give any money, or property, or loan any money, or credit to or in aid of any individual, association, company or corporation, except for the necessary support of the poor and infirm . . . .

Awarding additional compensation for services already rendered results in the unnecessary and improper use of public funds.

The board of commissioners awarded this payment to Mr. Pearson to compensate him for medical benefits called for in his contract that he never received. The contract does not provide any benefit "cash out" provisions, however, and it was Mr. Pearson's responsibility to sign up for the medical benefits package which he never did.

We recommend the board of commissioners not increase compensation to employees after the services have been rendered.

We further recommend the board of commissioners seek reimbursement for the improper payment from Mr. Pearson.